

2022

The Recognition of the United States: How European Nations Recognized the Sovereignty of America

Jesus Ruvalcaba
CSUSB

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/history-in-the-making>



Part of the [United States History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Ruvalcaba, Jesus (2022) "The Recognition of the United States: How European Nations Recognized the Sovereignty of America," *History in the Making*: Vol. 15, Article 9.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/history-in-the-making/vol15/iss1/9>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the History at CSUSB ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in History in the Making by an authorized editor of CSUSB ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@csusb.edu.

The Recognition of the United States: How European Nations Recognized the Sovereignty of America

By Jesus Ruvalcaba

Abstract: The diplomacy between the United States and countries in Europe during the Revolutionary War (1775–1783) has been of note for historians throughout American history as one can see how the United States' foreign policy began to develop during the war due to international diplomacy. However, the specific discourse surrounding the diplomacy of American recognition has been lacking, in particular from the perspective of the European powers who formally recognized the United States as a sovereign country. The process of recognition is a vital part to the development of any country, both new and established. In addition to being vital, it is also beneficial. Yet how could recognition be beneficial for both countries, the recognized and the recognizee, at the same time? This article focuses on the perspective of three European countries (France, the United Provinces, and Great Britain) and key American diplomats to uncover the complex process of how the United States became a recognized country by major European powers. By examining the motives of each European country individually, one can see how the recognition of a new country is beneficial to established countries and how it falls within their desired foreign policy. Recognition and diplomacy also show the ambitions of certain political figures within the United States, as each individual had conflicting views on the development of the new American country.

The recognition of a country by those around the global community is an important step towards their development. Some of the requirements that are needed to be considered a sovereign

country are a permanent population, a defined territory, one government, and the ability to pursue the relations with other sovereign states, in addition to having the idea of being independent. The recognition of the state acknowledges the sovereignty of the newly formed entity, therefore making the country viable as a force to trade, create alliances, or even go to war with. Countries today continue to struggle to acquire that recognition from the global community.¹ However, what about the United States? Like all newly formed countries of today, the United States had to go through a similar process to be recognized by European powers in the eighteenth century. The United States declared independence from Great Britain on July 4, 1776, however, the first official recognition of United States sovereignty by a European power did not come until years after following the American Revolution (1775–1783).

The first European power to recognize the United States was France, arguably the country's first European ally. A few years later, countries such as the United Provinces, and eventually Great Britain would also recognize the United States and its sovereignty. Even though the recognition of the United States was important for the Americans, the recognition of the new country allowed others (like France, the United Provinces, and Great Britain) to gain from American independence. The recognition gave the United States influence in decisions as a country, yet this would not have happened unless European countries gained from the recognition. This piece will concentrate on the French, Dutch, American, and British perspectives, as each of these offers a view of the war with the British and how American recognition related to that war. For the French, recognition meant the balancing of power. For the Dutch, recognition meant a revival of the once

¹ The recognition of a country is a subjective matter. While one country can recognize a new country, another can choose not to. Looking at the United Nations, since they are the global organizations in which a majority of all countries participate in global diplomacy, countries such as Palestine, Kosovo, Taiwan, and Western Sahara are a few of the countries that have not received recognition by the global organization, all for various reasons.

flourishing country whereas for the American revolutionaries, recognition meant liberty from the British empire. And for the British, recognition was a way for them to maintain their international status. By focusing on the process of American recognition, one can find an added layer to not just the diplomacy of the war, which primarily focuses on the American perspective, but to the status quo of the Western world, as it aids to understand why certain countries have not achieved recognition by already established countries.

The diplomacy of the United States has been well covered by various historians. One of these historians, Jonathan Dull, provides a detailed coverage of this diplomacy, putting it within the European context in order to understand how alliances and decisions were made during the American Revolution, as the previous history of American diplomacy was outdated.² However, historians do not focus on the recognition of the United States, let alone the process behind it. Instead, historians focus more on the broad events of diplomacy during the American Revolution or choose to focus on the diplomatic aspects that are required for their personal research. Thus, by focusing on the recognition of the United States, this paper will add to the existing discourse of diplomacy during the Revolutionary War, concentrating on the recognition of the United States, a part of history that is not discussed as much.

French Perspective

As previously mentioned, the process of recognition for the United States has not been an area of focus for historians. For the Franco-American alliance (1778–1783), however, the diplomacy between the two countries has been better discussed. For example, a large part of Jonathan Dull's book, *A Diplomatic History of the American Revolution*, published in 1985, focuses on the French

² Jonathan R. Dull, *A Diplomatic History of the American Revolution* (Yale University Press, 1985).

view of diplomacy in relation to the Revolutionary War. Historian Ronald Hoffman's 1981 book, *Diplomacy and Revolution: The Franco-American Alliance of 1778*, discusses the relationship of France and the United States leading up to the signing of the Treaty of Alliance in 1778, which recognized the United States as a country from the French side.³ For the French, there were three figures that dictated the recognition of the United States: the Count of Vergennes Charles Gravier (1719–1787), the Ambassador of France to the United States Conrad-Alexandre Gérard de Rayneval (1729–1790), and King Louis XVI (1754–1793). Between these three, the recognition of the United States occurred in a way that benefited the French and King Louis XVI's foreign policy. For the French, the recognition of the United States was not about recognizing the sovereignty of the new country, but rather, was a way to create a balance of power that weakened the influence and strength that the British empire held in both Europe and the North American colonies.

During the reign of King Louis XVI (r. 1774–1792), one of the aspects of French foreign policy was to maintain a balance of power within the European continent.⁴ However, as the eighteenth century progressed, British power expanded, creating an imbalance of powers within the European powers. The rise of revolutionary sentiment in the American Colonies provided the opportunity for King Louis XVI and France to exploit and decrease the influence the British had in North America and Europe. In a verbal response from King Louis XVI in early 1777, he expressed his support towards the revolutionary effort by his willingness to provide eight ships to defend the shores of the United States from the incoming British attacks along with allowing American sailors to use the ports within France, Spain, and the United Provinces.⁵ The intent

³ Ronald Hoffman, *Diplomacy and Revolution: The Franco-American Alliance of 1778* (University of Virginia Press,

⁴ Dull, *A Diplomatic History of the American Revolution*, 33-40.

⁵ Charles Gravier, "The King's Answer to the American Commissioners, 13 January, 1777," Founders Online, National Archives, January 13, 1777, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-23-02-0097>.

of the French monarch was to weaken British power by removing a large portion of the British colonies in the Americas from their possession, while at the same time creating an informal alliance between the French, Spanish, and Dutch against the British in Europe.⁶

However, within this verbal response there is also hesitation from the French monarch to provide full support to the Americans for their war against the British. King Louis XVI recognized the strength of the British Navy, which was considerably larger than the French fleet. By outwardly supporting the American revolutionaries, the French placed themselves in a position to go to war directly with the British, a war which the country was not ready to take on considering they were still recovering from the high number of casualties during the Seven Years' War (1756–1763).⁷ The Americans noticed this skepticism from both the French monarch and the Count of Vergennes, Charles Gravier, in which, rather than it being a certain promise, French aid appeared to be superficial at least in regard to sending French ships to the American coast.⁸ For a majority of the French monarchy and governing body, helping the American cause—let alone recognizing the sovereignty of the newly formed country—was a large risk that would drive the French into a war that could potentially not provide any benefit.⁹

One of the supporters of the American cause was Conrad-Alexandre Gérard, the French ambassador to the United States. From the early stages of the Franco-American diplomatic

⁶ Dull, *A Diplomatic History of the American Revolution*, 33–40

⁷ Gravier, “The King’s Answer to the American Commissioners, 13 January, 1777.”

⁸ American Commissioners, Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee, “The American Commissioners to Gérard, 14 January 1777,” Founders Online, National Archives, January 14, 1777,

<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-23-02-0102>.

⁹ American Commissioners, Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee, “The American Commissioners to Gérard, 14 January 1777,” Founders Online, National Archives, January 14, 1777,

<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-23-02-0102>.

relationship, Gérard became an advocate of the American cause, even providing funds to the American revolutionaries when the French monarchy did not.¹⁰ In order to attain more support from the French, the Americans needed to demonstrate their ability to support the French similarly to how the Americans were receiving help from the French and their allies. Whether it as through financial support (which was difficult considering the United States was a new country) or a strong defensive alliance (which was against the foreign policy the United States wanted to pursue), the United States had to demonstrate their ability to support the French in a way that aided France's foreign policy of balancing the powers in Europe by weakening the British.

Between September 19 and October 17, 1777, the Battle of Saratoga occurred between the Americans and the British. This battle was decisive in the process of attaining recognition from France. The United States defeated the British at Saratoga, showing all of Europe, in particular the French, that the United States had the ability to compete with the already established European powers. After this battle, there was an even greater urgency from the French to create an alliance with the United States, as the new country showed that it could defend its independence from the British. In his letter to the American Commissioners, Gérard opened by stating, "M. Gérard désirant d'avoir l'honneur de voir Messieurs Franklin, Deane et Lee demain matin [Mr. Gérard wishes to have the honor of seeing gentlemen. Franklin, Deane and Lee tomorrow morning]," in order to begin the process of creating a treaty between the United States and France that recognized the United States as a new country.¹¹ In addition to the ability to defend itself, the victory showed that the United States could be a worthy ally for the French against the

¹⁰ American Commissioners, Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee, "The American Commissioners to Gérard, 14 January 1777."

¹¹ Conrad-Alexandre Gérard, "Conrad-Alexandre Gérard to the American Commissioners 5 December, 1777," Founders Online, National Archives, December 5, 1777, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-25-02-0176>.

British, thereby creating a balance of powers through alliances, which was a primary goal for French diplomacy at the time¹². In response, the Americans immediately dispatched diplomats to France to discuss the recognition of their sovereignty. Attaining the recognition of the United States as a sovereign nation showed other European powers that the United States was on the same level as them.¹³ And thus, the negotiations began over what would become the Treaty of Alliance (1778) between the French and Americans.

Within the Treaty of Alliance, the French managed to create a treaty that benefited them profoundly for recognizing the United States. For the Americans, the Treaty of Alliance had the French recognize the sovereignty of the United States while at the same time to receive more direct aid from the French.¹⁴ Even though the main purpose of the treaty was to recognize the United States as a country, for the French it was quite different. France took the opportunity to make the Treaty of Alliance a proper defense alliance in their favor against the British to create their version of the balance of powers. The first article within the treaty does not recognize the sovereignty of the United States, but rather it states that “the said United States, shall make a common cause and aid [to its allies] mutually.”¹⁵ This refers to the fact that if Great Britain was to go to war with France, then the United States had to support the French. The first acknowledgement that the treaty makes for the recognition of the United States is not

¹² Dull, *A Diplomatic History of the American Revolution*, 34

¹³ The American Commissioners, “The American Commissioner to [Gérard] 20 December, 1777,” Founders Online, National Archives, December 20, 1777, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-25-02-0240>.

¹⁴ American Commissioners, Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, Arthur Lee, John Adams, “The American Commissioners to [Gérard] 30 January 1778,” Founders Online, National Archives, January 30, 1778, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-25-02-0423>.

¹⁵ Gérard, Conrad-Alexandre, American Commissioners, Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, Arthur Lee, and John Adams, “The Franco-American Treaty of Alliance, Article 1, 6 February 1778,” Founders Online, National Archives, February 6, 1778, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-25-02-0476>.

mentioned until Article 2, which is when the treaty directly states “the essential and direct End of the present defensive alliance is to maintain effectually the liberty, Sovereignty, and independence absolute and unlimited of the said United States.”¹⁶ Likewise, the treaty made it so that the United States could not end their war with Great Britain unless the French agreed to sue for peace as well.

Article 8 of the Treaty of Alliance states that “neither of the two parties shall conclude truce or peace with Great Britain, without the formal consent of the other first obtained,” creating a relationship between the French and Americans that made those of the new country somewhat reliant on the decisions of those in Europe, specifically France.¹⁷ This article is important regarding the sovereignty of the United States. Even though the French recognized the United States as an independent country, it is clear that the French were now attempting to have the United States as a satellite state (a formally independent country that remains under the political, economic, and military influence or control of another country), in which they had to rely on the French for decisions. This marked a change within the Franco-American diplomatic relationship, as the United States was no longer looking for recognition from the French as a sovereign country, but rather a self-reliant independent country.

¹⁶ Gérard, Franklin, Deane, Lee, Adams, “Treaty of Alliance with France (1778): Article 2,” National Archives, accessed May 5, 2022, <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/treaty-of-alliance-with-france>.

¹⁷ Gérard, Franklin, Deane, Lee, Adams, “Treaty of Alliance with France (1778): Article 8,” National Archives, accessed May 5, 2022, <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/treaty-of-alliance-with-france>.

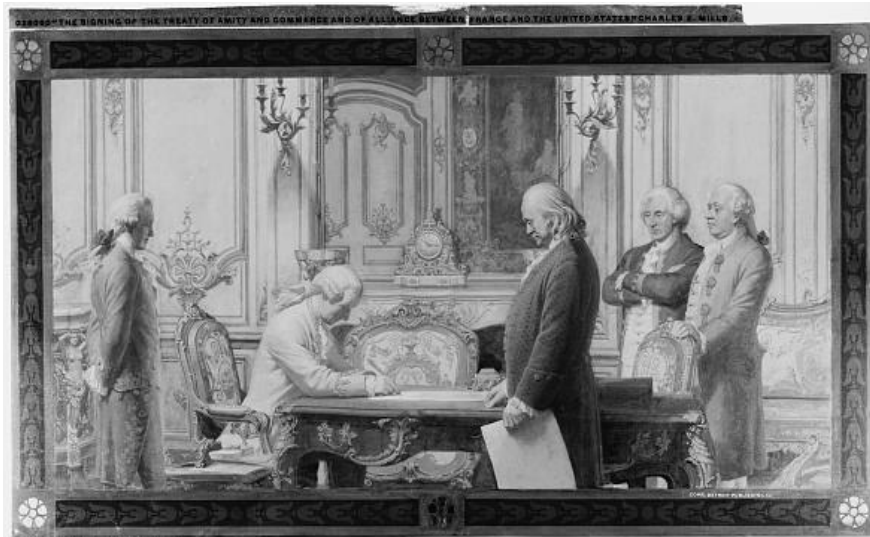


Figure 1. Signing of the Treaty of Alliance between France and the United States. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.¹⁸

Once the Treaty of Alliance was ratified and signed, the Revolutionary War came to include the French. Yet, because of the language within the treaty, it made American independence more of a partial recognition of sovereignty rather than an acknowledgement of the United States as a country capable of making its own decisions. In a letter from John Adams (1735–1826) to Henry Laurens (1724–1792), then-President of the Continental Congress, Adams discusses how the King of Britain, George III (1738–1820), made another attempt to achieve peace without the involvement of the French.¹⁹ In the end, the Americans did not attempt to make peace with Britain due to the treaty that the Americans signed with the French. The alliance created a

¹⁸ Charles E. Mills, “The Signing of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce and of Alliance between France and the United States,” Library of Congress, January 1, 1970, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/det.4a26451/>.

¹⁹ John Adams, “From John Adams to Henry Laurens, 27 July 1778,” Founders Online, National Archives, July 27, 1778, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-06-02-0249>.

situation between the French and Americans that made the United States reliant on France for major decisions regarding the Revolutionary War, therefore showing how France's foreign policy regarding the balance of power within Europe was being achieved. If the American revolutionaries could not make peace with Great Britain on their own without French consent, then the Americans would be forced to align with the French, regardless of any conflict that arose, creating a supposed balance of power in Europe between the French and the British.

It was not until a few years later, when the recognition of the United States by the Dutch began to seem feasible, that the United States and its diplomats were considered independent in making decisions. The United States needed more loans for the war, and Adams thought it best to approach the Dutch for that money in order to "render us less dependent on France."²⁰ Gravier and the French court feared that any acceptance of a loan by the United States from the Dutch would lead to an Anglo-Dutch war, a war between Great Britain and the Dutch, thereby denying the French from receiving aid from the Dutch for the Revolutionary War. With the Dutch at war with the British, the Dutch could not be able to financially aid France in their war against the British. In addition to this, France lost its grip on the United States and was not in charge of the decisions that the United States made in regard to its foreign policy. By allowing Adams to travel to the Hague, the capital of political and economic issues in the United Provinces, to negotiate with the Dutch for loans, the French were recognizing the United States' ability to make its own decisions, thus giving the new country a second form of recognition. For the French, the whole process of recognizing the United States as a country was part of their initial plan for balancing the power in Europe, which ultimately shifted to an attempt to make the United States a satellite country, but ended with France giving full power to the United States once the Americans looked at the Dutch for

²⁰ John Ferling, "John Adams, Diplomat," *The William and Mary Quarterly* Vol. 5, no. 2 (April 1994): 245.

economic help, allowing them to make their own decisions in foreign diplomacy.

Dutch Perspective

Unlike France, the United Province's foreign policy varied in many aspects, as the Dutch found themselves in a different position compared to the French. Even though the French were in a position of debt and struggling to keep up with the British during the Revolutionary War, the French monarchy was still able to compete with the British and create a balance of power in Europe. The Dutch, however, were on a decline from the Golden Age (1588–1672) of the previous century as their economic and political strength slowly diminished throughout Europe and their overseas colonies. The United Provinces found themselves in a position in which the country wanted to restore its once glorious self. Recognizing the United States as a country was a risky action for the Dutch compared to the French because of the risk of war with Great Britain that threatened the Dutch, which stalled their recognition of the United States as a sovereign country.

The main strength of the United Provinces lied in their economic superiority against the European countries, such as Great Britain, France, and Spain, who colonized the Americas, Africa, and Asia. As time passed, this economic power slowly diminished. By the eve of the Revolutionary War in the late eighteenth century, the Dutch economy was faltering compared to its golden age. Thus, for the Dutch, protecting their economy became the main priority and was crucial to the decision of recognizing the United States. In fact, recognizing the United States was a large risk due to two factors. For one, the recognition of the United States meant war with Great Britain, meaning Dutch trading ships were to be intercepted and trade decreased. The second reason was more dangerous to the preservation of the Dutch economy. By recognizing the United States as a sovereign country, the Dutch were inviting a new competitor into the global market, one with a vast abundance of resources and the ability to trade with many

European countries. In other words, the recognition of the United States as a sovereign country could have long-term repercussions for the Dutch.

The Dutch primarily feared the direct influence that a war could have on their economy. Dutch Ambassador to the United States, Charles William Frederick Dumas (1721–1796), better known as C. W. F. Dumas, made this clear in communications with the various representatives of the United States. In a letter to Benjamin Franklin on October 2, 1778, Dumas requested a declaration from the Americans that trade be secured between the two countries to “calm the Dutch fear that the British might succeed in having them excluded.”²¹ In order to safeguard the economy of their country, the Dutch needed assurances that their trade with the new country (the United States) would not only maintain steady, but also potentially increase. A treaty of commerce, similar to the one the United States made with the French, needed to be signed for the Dutch to recognize the United States as it “calm the Dutch fear that the British might succeed in having them excluded—in a whole or in part, directly or indirectly—from trade with the United States.”²²

Why was this treaty needed to ensure the stability of trade between the Dutch and the United States? During the Revolutionary War, the United States and the United Provinces maintained a healthy trade relationship despite the war between the United States and Great Britain, as the United States was using Dutch ports to trade and store their ships overseas.²³ However, the relationship between the Dutch and British deteriorated as the Revolutionary War progressed, for the Dutch were leaning towards

²¹ C. W. F. Dumas, “C. W. F. Dumas to Benjamin Franklin: A Translation, 2 October 1778,” Founders Online, National Archives, October 2, 1778, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-07-02-0073-0002>.

²² Dumas, “C. W. F. Dumas to Benjamin Franklin: A Translation, 2 October 1778.”

²³ The American Commissioners, “The American Commissioners to the Committee for Foreign Affairs, 30 November 1777,” Founders Online, National Archives, November 30, 1777, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-25-02-0150>.

supporting the Americans and French rather than remaining neutral.²⁴ The primary factor that restricted Dutch actions was the threat of war with the British. In the letter that Dumas sent to Franklin, the British intention of weakening the Americans with the restriction of trade was anticipated.²⁵

In 1780, however, war broke out between the Dutch and British. This war was separate from the Revolutionary War that the Americans and French were fighting. This war was also a crucial point. Since this war was separate from the War of Independence that the Americans and French were fighting, the Dutch could sue for peace in their war with the British at any point because they were not part of the Treaty of Alliance that the French and Americans created requiring the consent of both countries who signed the treaty. The effect that peace between the Dutch and the British would mean the British could once more focus on the war in North America, rather than having to split their resources between two wars. This was harmful for both the United States and France as they both had stakes in the outcome of the Revolutionary War.

Yet, there was still the long-term effect that the recognition of the United States had on the Dutch, leading to the United Provinces hesitation of recognition. With the United States being a sovereign country, they would be able to trade with whomever they pleased and not rely on the British, potentially leading to the Dutch losing that part of the trade due to the United States' ability to trade its natural resources, directly competing with the Dutch in many aspects of the trade market. In a letter from Adams to the President of Congress, Samuel Huntington (1786–1796), Adams claims the Dutch will “find a powerful rivalry from that maritime

²⁴ Though this source is closer to the time period in which the Dutch Republic recognized the United States as a country, it still reflects the sentiment the Dutch felt the years prior to this development. John Adams, “From John Adams to John Jay, 26 November 1781,” Founders Online, National Archives, November 26, 1781, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-12-02-0054>.

²⁵ Dumas, “C. W. F. Dumas to Benjamin Franklin: A Translation, 2 October 1778.”

people, the Americans.”²⁶ This competition led to the United Provinces’ hesitation in recognizing the United States, as this competition would lead to a loss instead of a gain. Within this same letter, Adams questioned the right of the Dutch to own the Spice Islands (the Maluku Islands, an archipelago east of Indonesia), which were a large part of the Dutch economy for centuries (1620–1810).²⁷ Even though it was not intentional, Adams tried to establish that the main goal of the country was to be an economic participant. Adams directly challenged the Dutch Republic’s trade, which made the Dutch question whether or not the recognition of the United States truly was beneficial to them. In a letter written in 1782, Adams notes that “hopes have never been strong in anybody, of inducing the Republick [sic] to a sudden Alliance with France and America.”²⁸

It was not until the Dutch-American Treaty of Amity and Commerce, signed on September 6, 1782, that the United Provinces’ secured economic security with the United States. The treaty established that ships from each country would be protected by both countries, in addition to allowing merchants from each respective country to trade freely within the other’s borders.²⁹ The Dutch gained the economic security it wished from the new country, while the United States achieved recognition from a second European country. Even though the United Provinces decline continued after the Anglo-Dutch and Revolutionary Wars, this treaty ensured the continual commercial relationship between the Dutch and the United States. In a completely separate effort

²⁶ John Adams, “I. To the President of Congress, No. 49, 19 April 1780,” Founders Online, National Archives, April 19, 1780, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-09-02-0115-0002>.

²⁷ Adams, “I. To the President of Congress, No. 49, 19 April 1780.”

²⁸ John Adams, “From John Adams to Robert R. Livingston, 21 February 1782,” Founders Online, National Archives, February 21, 1782, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-12-02-0162>.

²⁹ John Adams, States General of the Netherlands, “VIII. Final Text of the Dutch-American Treaty of Amity and Commerce: A Translation, 6 September 1782,” Founders Online, National Archives, September 6, 1782, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-13-02-0162-0011-0002>.

from the Americans, the French used the United Province's recognition of the United States as a way to prevent peace between the Dutch and British, but also as a way to not make France reliant on the Dutch via the creation of a treaty.³⁰ As both wars progressed, the Dutch started to both fear and rely on the French, as the French were increasingly more involved in Dutch affairs.

American Perspectives

Regardless, even though the recognition of the United States eventually became important for both the French and the Dutch in their own views, the recognition of the new country was arguably not as important as for the Americans themselves. The Americans were the ones constantly pushing for this recognition as it was important for them to be thought of as an actual country that could make their own decisions, independent from the British.

In respect to the two cases of the French and the Dutch, there were two figures in American history that spearheaded the process of recognition: Benjamin Franklin and John Adams. Both Franklin and Adams were vital to securing the recognition of the United States by the French and Dutch. Franklin was the leading figure of the American Commissioners who negotiated with the French and eventually became the leading diplomat of the United States to France. Adams, on the other hand, became the American diplomat for the Dutch after Adams began to question the intentions of the French with the United States.³¹ Each was an ideal diplomat for the respective countries they were representing, and they allowed the United States to establish its own influence in international affairs within the first few years of the country's independence.

³⁰ James Hutson, *John Adams and the Diplomacy of the American Revolution*, (University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, 1980).

³¹ Ferling, 241.

Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790)

The diplomatic life of Benjamin Franklin has been subject to much discussion. Historian and author, Jonathan Dull, provides a discussion on how Franklin became a diplomat and explores his actions while acting as the diplomat of the United States to France.³² Historian Maurice Couve de Murville even makes the claim that “no one today would seriously question... one the greatest diplomats of all time.”³³ Even though the statement by de Murville could be heavily debated, there is no denying that Franklin was a vital player in securing the French recognition of the United States as a country. Franklin led the negotiations between the French and Americans for the American side, constantly attempting to place the United States in the best possible position in any given situation. Whether it was following French orders or pushing for American demands, Franklin was the man leading the American Commissioners, gaining the respect from those high up in the French socioeconomic hierarchy, such as Gravier.

One of the larger aspects that allowed Franklin to be such an influence in the diplomacy between the United States and France was the recognition of Franklin’s position within the United States. Being highly thought of throughout the United States by his peers, Franklin was well versed in the state the country was in. This sentiment of Franklin’s knowledge was shown by his friend Jacques Barbeu-Dubourg (1709–1779), French physician, botanist, writer, translator and publisher. In a letter Barbeu-Dubourg wrote to Franklin, he questioned why he, Barbeu-Dubourg, should be the one to bring up the American cause to the French court:

³² Jonathan R. Dull, “Franklin the Diplomat: The French Mission,” *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* Vol. 72, no. 1 (1982): 1-76.

³³ Maurice Couve de Murville, “Benjamin Franklin: The Diplomat and Journalist,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* Vol. 100, no. 4 (1956): 316-325.

Comment m'ingerer dans une suite
d'affaires majeures et de negociations
importantes sur la simple parole d'un
inconnu, soi disant porteur de lettres qu'il ne
saurait représenter? Comment m'annoncer
moi même à quantité de gens en place,
connus et inconnus, pour traiter avec eux des
affaires d'un peuple étranger sans la
moindre lettre de croyance de sa part?³⁴

[How can I be part of major important
affairs and negotiations of the word of a
stranger, who sends letters of those who he
can't represent? How can I announce myself
to so many people, known or unknown, to
try and deal with affairs of unknown people
without a single belief for themselves?]

By doing this, Barbeau-Dubourg gave Franklin the impression that he had to be one to go to France to represent the United States, as he, as a Frenchman, could not represent well the people of a nation unknown. The Frenchmen recognized that Franklin was knowledgeable in the affairs of the soon to be new country.

Before Franklin left to represent the United States in France, he was already leading diplomatic relations for the United States. Right after the United States declared itself independent from Great Britain, Franklin instructed American Founding Father, merchant, politician, and diplomat, and a supporter of American independence, Silas Deane (1737–1789), to tell the courts of Europe, with more emphasis on the French court, that the colonies

³⁴ Jacques Barbeau-Dubourg, "To Benjamin Franklin from Jacques Barbeau-Dubourg, June 10–July 2, 1776," Founders Online, National Archives, June 10–July 2, 1776, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-22-02-0274>.

were separated from the British.³⁵ This letter, intended for Deane, demonstrates Franklin's ability to delegate tasks for the recognition of the United States, such as him ordering Deane to "immediately communicate the piece (Declaration of the Congress for a final separation of Great Britain) to the Court of France, and send copies of it to the other Courts of Europe," as he was immediately attempting to gain support from European courts. Eventually, Congress sent Franklin, alongside American diplomat Arthur Lee (1740–1792), to France to join Deane who had been in France since July 1776, to discuss how the French could help the war effort. Together, the three came to be known as the American Commissioners, a group of diplomats who represented the United States when discussing foreign policy with other countries, though Deane would be forced to leave under a veil of suspicion that he was aiding the British. The American Commissioners, led by Franklin, were the ones in France negotiating the Treaty of Alliance of 1778, making the French recognition of the United States official.

As previously mentioned, the Battle of Saratoga was a crucial turning point of the Revolutionary War, as this battle demonstrated to the French the United States' ability to be a worthy ally against the British. Following the battle, Conrad Alexandre-Gérard immediately sent a letter to the American Commissioners to discuss the creation of an alliance between the French and the Americans. Franklin saw this as the perfect opportunity to receive recognition from the French. The American Commissioners quickly responded to the letter stating that they were "desirous of a conference with you [Alexandre-Gérard] on a subject, that appears to us of importance."³⁶ For the Americans,

³⁵ Committee of Secret Correspondence, "The Committee of Secret Correspondence to [Silas Deane], 8 July 1776," Founders Online, National Archives, July 8, 1776, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-22-02-0298>.

³⁶ The American Commissioners, "The American Commissioners to Conrad-Alexandre Gérard, 4 March 1778," Founders Online, National Archives, March 4, 1778, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-26-02-0026>.

this conference was for the recognition of a sovereign country that can make its own decisions without approval of any power. However, within this letter, there is a tone of desperation. In sending this letter, the Americans are portraying an image that they need the recognition of the French over any other aspect of an alliance, such as defense or economic support. This desperation for recognition allowed the French to create a treaty, the Treaty of Alliance, that benefited them more than the Americans. Additionally, this desperation appeared once more when the Americans began discussing the details within the Treaty of Alliance and were ultimately accepting of the terms. They did, however, require that “Sovereignty...be inserted in the two places propos’d [sic].”³⁷ The Americans once more were focused on the recognition aspect instead of creating a treaty that portrayed an image of the new country as an equal to established countries. Eventually, this led to a split within the American dignitaries as to how diplomacy should be done. In particular, it created disagreements between Franklin and Adams.

While Adams wanted more activity to be done so that the United States would not be so reliant on France, Franklin, in the eyes of Adams, was only attempting to please the French court. Adams stated that Franklin “loves his Ease, hates to offend, and seldom gives any Opinion until obliged to do it.”³⁸ Adams did not enjoy Franklin’s method of diplomacy, as he felt the tactic of pleasing people was making the United States more of a colony to France rather than an independent country. Eventually, Franklin’s image, in the eyes of Adams, deteriorated leading him to insult and question Franklin’s ability. In a letter to American lawyer, politician, and Founding Father, Thomas McKean (1734–1817), Adams described Franklin as a “Wit, and a Humourist... he is not a sufficient Statesman, he knows too little of American Affairs or

³⁷ The American Commissioners, “The American Commissioners to Conrad-Alexandre Gérard, 4 March 1778.”

³⁸ John Adams, “From John Adams to Samuel Adams, 7 December 1778,” Founders Online, National Archives, December 7, 1778, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-07-02-0175>.

The Recognition of the United States

the Politicks [sic] of Europe, and takes too little Pains to inform himself of Either.”³⁹ At this point, Adams held the belief that Franklin was doing nothing to help the American cause. Instead, according to Adams, Franklin was protecting French interests which were to keep the United States in a position of dependency on the French. As soon as Adams got the opportunity to do so, he looked for other ways to raise money so the United States could be a sovereign country that did not economically rely on a European power.

John Adams (1735–1826)

John Adams, one the original founding fathers, became a diplomat for the United States to European countries to secure alliances and financial aid. Although he is an important factor as to why the United States managed to secure recognition from both the French and the Dutch, his ability as a diplomat has been under heavy scrutiny. Historian James Hutson even goes as far to say that Adams was not crucial at all, claiming that Adams was not important in securing the recognition of the United States by the Dutch.⁴⁰ However, historian John Ferling and his depiction of how Adams should be represented as a diplomat is a more accurate method to understanding Adams and his viewpoints on recognition because of the bias Hutson exhibits against Adams.⁴¹ Though the

³⁹ John Adams, “From John Adams to Thomas McKean, 20 September 1779,” Founders Online, National Archives, september 20, 1779, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-08-02-0112>.

⁴⁰ Hutson claims that Adams had nothing to do in the recognition of the Dutch, even comparing Adams to a “man on a raft, being borne towards his objective by powerful but imperceptible currents.” Hutson focuses more on the unreliable behavior of Adams, such as him being “presumptuous and arrogant,” rather than the goals that Adams wanted to achieve (even though those goals were acknowledged). James Hutson, *Letters of a Distinguished American: Twelve Essays by John Adams on American Foreign Policy, 1780*, (Library of Congress, Washington, 1978), 108-109.

⁴¹ Ferling’s portrayal of Adams was a reexamination of how Adams was shown in historiography. Hutson’s view of Adams, for example, was one of the

recognition of the United States was important for Adams, he was more concerned with the overall well-being of the country and its ability to be recognized as a sovereign country.

For Adams, the most important goal for the new country was economic prosperity. When discussing with the President of Congress, Adams stated that the American Revolution would have a large effect on Europe: “None of the Powers of Europe, and few of the most knowing Politicians, have considered, what Effect this Revolution will have on the general [economic] system of Europe.”⁴² With this statement, the economic system of Europe was included in what the American Revolution influenced. In the same letter, Adams went into detail about how the recognition of the United States would influence the developing world system. By claiming that “in this branch of commerce, the Dutch would find a powerful Rivalry, from that maritime people the Americans,” Adams directly states that one way the new country would influence European economies is through competition.⁴³ By having the United States as a recognized country, then other countries would trade with them. Automatically, the United States, by becoming its own independent country was not only weakening the British economy to an extent, but it also allowed other European countries to find new trade options.

In addition to this, Adams acknowledged that the recognition of the United States meant that the United States would have control over the natural resources that are available within their country. One of the reasons as to why the United States were a competitor to the established European nations is due to the plethora of natural resources. The United States, for example, could control trade within the Americas, as the influence of

perspectives Ferling attempted to change, demonstrating that Adams beforehand was viewed unfairly. The purpose of this article was to “reconsider Adams by exploring his motives and behavior during the War of Independence through the prism of his comprehension of how to serve America’s national interests.” Ferling, “John Adams, Diplomat,” 227-252.

⁴² Adams, “I. To the President of Congress, No. 49, 19 April 1780.”

⁴³ Adams, “I. To the President of Congress, No. 49, 19 April 1780.”

The Recognition of the United States

European countries was waning.⁴⁴ Furthermore, all of the British possessions in the colonies that aided in building up the British economy would belong to the United States as soon as they conceded the war. According to Adams:

With the Independence of America, we must give up our fisheries 'on the banks of Newfoundland in the American seas.' Supposing this true, which it is not at the present, but our infatuation in continuing the war may make it so, what follows? If Britain lose them, who will gain them? France and America. Have not France and America then as urgent a motive to contend for the gain, as we prevent the loss?⁴⁵

With this letter, Adams made it clear that the former possessions belong to the United States and, to a certain extent, France as well. This transfer of possessions that would occur once the British lost the war and recognized the United States as a sovereign nation made the United States a prosperous commercial nation. However, in the view of Adams, as we will see, this was in danger because of the French.

As previously mentioned, there were two parts in the process of gaining France's recognition of the United States. There was the actual recognition during the Treaty of Alliance in 1778, in which France recognized the United States on paper, and the second came in the form of the recognition of the sovereignty of the United States and its ability to make its own decisions without consulting other countries. The second form of recognition came to be because Adams recognized how the French were treating the Americans in regard to foreign policy. Adams acknowledged that the relationship and alliance between the United States and France

⁴⁴ Adams, "I. To the President of Congress, No. 49, 19 April 1780."

⁴⁵ Hutson, 10.

“naturally coincide with their several views and interests, as soon as American Independence shall be acknowledged by the power of Europe.”⁴⁶ However, in Adams perspective, this relationship between the two countries was one sided. He realized that the United States was developing as a nation reliant on France instead of growing as a self-sufficient country: “America will naturally wish, while she is rising from her infant state into opulence and power, to cover her dominions under the protection of France.”⁴⁷ In the area of commerce, if the United States were to be reliant on the protection of their ships by the French navy, then, by proxy, American trade is reliant on the French rather than being an independent network. The goal that was set by the United States early on was to be a country that did not participate in European wars, but rather a country that traded with whomever wished to do so, as stated by Adams when he said “but it will not be the interest of America to go to war with any power of Europe, it will certainly be her interest to trade with every power of Europe.”⁴⁸ The alliance that was created between the French and the Americans prevented this goal from occurring. If the French did not want to protect the American ships from trading with a country, then the original policy regarding trade that the United States wanted to implement was at risk. Thus, this arising situation led Adams to look at other countries for financial aid, rather than completely relying on the French.

The opportunity came for Adams when he left France for the United Provinces on July 27, 1780. Though it was against the wishes of Gravier and Franklin, Adams thought it crucial to seek a loan from the Dutch, while at the same time establishing diplomatic relations with other countries. In a letter to the President of Congress, Adams wrote, “I am sure, that a Loan might

⁴⁶ Adams, “I. To the President of Congress, No. 49, 19 April 1780.”

⁴⁷ Hutson, 3.

⁴⁸ Hutson, 6.

be obtained, by any one, with Power of Congress.”⁴⁹ This statement from Adams is important for two reasons. First, it established that the loan the United States needed could be obtained. Second, and arguably more important, is Adams’ claim that the United States ultimately had the power to decide who it traded with. By using the phrase “with Power of Congress,” Adams clarified that the ultimate power over national decisions rested with the government of the United States without the consultation of the French. Here, Adams began to separate the United States from France.

Even though Adams pushed for the loan to establish the recognition of the United States, the loan fell through. The capture of Henry Laurens (1723–1792), an American political leader involved in negotiating Dutch support for the Revolutionary War, by the British in 1780 made tensions rise between the Dutch and the English. This meant that if the United Provinces did give the loans to the United States, then the Dutch were going directly against the British crown and war would break out between the two.⁵⁰ Even though the Dutch public was in favor of the Americans because, according to Adams, there was a “Spirit of Resentment against the English,” the Dutch were not interested in going to war against the English.⁵¹ Nevertheless, Adams had accomplished his goal of attaining recognition by the Dutch, showing that Americans were not reliant on France but an independent country. Instead of having to entrust France to take action, the United States could be self-reliant with its decisions, such as looking for loans and creating alliances with other countries. The involvement of Adams in the diplomacy of the United States aided them in being recognized as a sovereign and independent country, rather than a sovereign but dependent one.

⁴⁹ John Adams, “From John Adams to the President of Congress Vol. 1, no 14 August 1780,” Founders Online, National Archives, August 1780, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-10-02-0033>.

⁵⁰ Hutson, 79-80.

⁵¹ Adams, “From John Adams to the President of Congress 14 January, 1781.”

British Recognition

Regardless of how important the recognition of the United States by the French and Dutch were, the ultimate form of recognition came from Great Britain. Although France was the first major European power to recognize the United States and Dutch recognition established the United States as its own independent country that was not reliant on France, the British recognition of the United States finalized the Revolutionary War and made US sovereignty official to the rest of Europe. The language of the treaty between Great Britain, the United States, and France is something of note. The Treaty of Paris (1783) was in a way how the British asserted its continued dominance over the Americans, even if the treaty granted what the United States wanted: sovereignty and independence.

Within the preamble of the Treaty of Paris, the recognition of sovereignty of the United States still coincides with the idea that the United States was reliant on France. Great Britain notes that a treaty, the Treaty of Peace, with the United States was agreed upon beforehand, but the Treaty of Paris was not finalized until peace between the British and French was agreed upon. The Treaty of Paris stated,

To constitute the treaty of peace proposed to be concluded between the crown of Great Britain and the United States, *but which treaty was not to be concluded until terms of peace should be agreed upon between Great Britain and France*, and his Britannic Majesty should be ready to conclude such treaty accordingly.⁵²

⁵² "Treaty Of Paris," A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774–1875, Library of Congress. Accessed December 10, 2021, <https://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsl&fileName=008%2Fllsl008.db&recNum=93>, emphasis added.

The Recognition of the United States

This statement affirmed the previously mentioned Article 8 of the Treaty of Alliance.⁵³ With the inclusion of the provision that the Treaty of Paris could not be finalized until the French agreed to its terms, Great Britain made the United States appear to the rest of the European powers that they were not at a point in which they could be self-reliant, but rather were still in need of the presence of a European power. Although the purpose of the Treaty of Paris was to recognize the United States as a country, the treaty itself still questioned whether the new country had complete sovereignty or not.



Figure 3. Signing of the Treaty of Paris. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.⁵⁴

This was not the only location within the Treaty of Paris where the sovereignty of the United States was questioned. Within

⁵³ Gérard, Franklin, Deane, Lee, Adams, “Treaty of Alliance with France (1778): Article 8.”

⁵⁴ C. Seiler, “Signing the Preliminary Treaty of Peace at Paris, November 30, 1782,” Library of Congress, accessed May 6, 2022, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2002722861/>.

Article 1 of the treaty, where Great Britain recognized the United States, there was doubt created regarding the recognition of the United States by other countries. As the wording of the article states,

His Britannic Majesty acknowledges the said United States... to be free, sovereign, independent States; that he treats with them as such; and for himself, his heirs and successors, relinquishes all claims to the government, propriety and territorial rights of the same, and every part thereof.⁵⁵

This statement within the treaty establishes the idea that the United States were property of the British crown up until the Treaty of Paris was signed. This had various effects in regard to the recognition of the United States. For one, the image of the United States as an independent country could be debated. There was a perception that what the United States had attained (sovereignty) was only achieved because the King of Great Britain relinquished his control of the American colonies, instead of the image in which the United States earned its independence. Likewise, this statement created an idea that all of the previous treaties and negotiations that the Americans had with countries (such as France and the United Provinces) were void. If Great Britain was claiming that the United States were not independent until the King said they were in 1783, then recognition by the French and Dutch in the years prior were invalidated. Once more, the British were attempting to devalue the recognition of the United States by diminishing the importance of having them as an ally within those treaties. For the British, this was an effort to limit the effects of losing their colonies. By portraying American independence as an act of benevolence on behalf of the British crown, the British were maintaining their

⁵⁵ "Treaty Of Paris," A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774–1875.

reputation around the world and elevating their negotiation power with other countries.

Conclusion

The recognition of the United States was not only beneficial for the new country itself and its reputation, but also for the countries that recognized it. There was an interactivity in place that influenced at what point and how the United States achieved recognition from each country. By examining the French, Dutch, and British perspectives in recognizing the United States, one can see various factors that influenced each country's decision in recognizing the United States. For the French, the value of a worthy ally to maintain a balance of power in Europe was sufficient for recognition. Though they recognized the United States in a treaty in 1778, the French considered the new country more as an independent French colony. This was the situation up until 1780, when the United States looked to negotiate with other countries for loans instead of just being reliant on the French. In the case of the United Provinces, the main worry of the country was the economic influence that the recognition of the United States would cause on their own trade market. By recognizing the new country, the Dutch not only gained a new trade competitor, but also started a war with Great Britain, one of their largest trade partners. Eventually, war broke out between the Dutch and British in 1781, making the recognition of the United States appear more favorable to the public of the United Provinces as a whole as it allowed them to have another trade partner and preserve their economic empire for slightly longer.

With the British, the process of recognition was difficult. If the British crown recognized the thirteen colonies as an independent country, they would lose possession of what was arguably their most valuable colony. However, the Revolutionary War reached a point in which continuing the war effort was not wise, leading the British to formally recognize the United States with the Treaty of Paris in 1783. Within the treaty, the British

attempted to reduce the importance of recognition by positing that the British allowed the United States to be an independent country, rather than recognizing that the Americans fought and defeated the British in a war for independence.

Though the recognition of the United States was a priority for all Americans, there were conflicts within the American camp between some of the leading figures. Benjamin Franklin, for example, was an individual who advocated primarily for the recognition of the United States via treaty, regardless of the position the country found itself in. John Adams, on the other hand, supported the idea of establishing a solid foundation among European countries during the process of recognition, rather than being reliant on any one European country. Even with the infighting, the main goal for all Americans was recognition. The process of recognition is difficult not only within the country attempting to be independent, but also within the countries who debate whether or not the proposed country is legitimate. By examining the process and difficulties surrounding the recognition of the United States, one can better understand why countries today still have not been recognized by the global community.

Bibliography

- Adams, John. "From John Adams to Henry Laurens, 27 July 1778." Founders Online, National Archive. July 27, 1778. <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-06-02-0249>.
- _____. "From John Adams to John Jay, 26 November 1781." Founders Online, National Archives. November 26, 1781. <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-12-02-0054>.
- _____. "From John Adams to Robert R. Livingston, 21 February 1782." Founders Online, National Archives. February 21 1782. <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-12-02-0162>.
- _____. "From John Adams to Samuel Adams, 7 December 1778." Founders Online, National Archives. December 7, 1778. <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-07-02-0175>.
- _____. "From John Adams to the President of Congress, No. 1, 14 August 1780." Founders Online, National Archives. August 1780. <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-10-02-0033>.
- _____. "From John Adams to Thomas McKean, 20 September 1779." Founders Online, National Archives. September 10, 1779. <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-08-02-0112>.
- _____. "I. To the President of Congress, No. 49, 19 April 1780." Founders Online, National Archives. April 19, 1780. <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-09-02-0115-0002>.
- Adams, John, and James H. Hutson. *Letters from a Distinguished American: Twelve Essays by John Adams on American Foreign Policy, 1780*. Washington: Library of Congress, 1978.
- American Commissioners. "The American Commissioners to [Gérard], 20 December 1777." Founders Online, National

- Archives. December 20, 1777.
<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-25-02-0240>.
- American Commissioners, Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee. “The American Commissioners to Gérard, 14 January 1777.” Founders Online, National Archives. January 14, 1777.
<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-23-02-0102>.
- American Commissioners, Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, Arthur Lee, John Adams. “The American Commissioners to [Gerard], 30 January 1778 [i.e. 27].” Founders Online, National Archives. January 30, 1778.
<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-25-02-0423>.
- _____. “The American Commissioners to Conrad-Alexandre Gérard, 4 March 1778.” Founders Online, National Archives. March 4, 1778.
<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-26-02-0026>.
- _____. “The American Commissioners to the Committee for Foreign Affairs, 30 November 1777.” Founders Online, National Archives. November 30, 1777.
<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-25-02-0150>.
- Barbeau-Dubourg, Jacques. “To Benjamin Franklin from Jacques Barbeau-Dubourg, [June 10–July 2, 1776].” Founders Online, National Archives. June 10–July 2, 1776.
<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-22-02-0274>.
- Committee of Secret Correspondence, Benjamin Franklin, John Dickinson, Benjamin Harrison, John Jay, and Thomas Johnson. “The Committee of Secret Correspondence to [Silas Deane], 8 July 1776.” Founders Online, National Archives. July 8, 1776.

<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-22-02-0298>.

De Murville, Maurice Couve. "Benjamin Franklin: The Diplomat and Journalist." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* Vol. 100, no. 4 (August 31, 1956): 316-325.

Dull, Jonathan R. *A Diplomatic History of the American Revolution*. Yale University Press, 1987.

_____. "Franklin the Diplomat: The French Mission." *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* Vol. 72, no. 1 (1982): 1-76.

Dumas, Charles William Frederic. "C. W. F. Dumas to Benjamin Franklin: A Translation, 2 October 1778." Founders Online, National Archives. October 2, 1778.

<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-07-02-0073-0002>.

Ferling, John, "John Adams, Diplomat." *The William and Mary Quarterly* Vol. 5, no. 2: 227-252.

Gérard, Conrad-Alexandre, American Commissioners, Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, Arthur Lee, and John Adams. "The Franco-American Treaty of Alliance, 6 February 1778." Founders Online, National Archives. February 6, 1778.

<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-25-02-0476>.

Gravier, Charles. "The King's Answer to the American Commissioners, 13 January 1777." Founders Online, National Archives. January 13, 1777.

<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-23-02-0097>.

Hoffman, Ronald, and Peter J. Albert. *Diplomacy and Revolution: The Franco-American Alliance of 1778*. Charlottesville: Published for the United States Capitol Historical Society by the University Press of Virginia, 1981.

Hutson, James H. *John Adams and the Diplomacy of the American Revolution*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2015.

- Mills, Charles E. "The Signing of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce and of Alliance between France and the United States." Library of Congress. January 1, 1970, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/det.4a26451/>.
- States General of the United Netherlands, and John Adams. "VIII. Final Text of the Dutch-American Treaty of Amity and Commerce: A Translation, 6 September 1782." *Founders Online*, National Archives. September 6, 1782. <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-13-02-0162-0011-0002>.
- "Treaty Of Paris." A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774–1875. Library of Congress. Accessed December 10, 2021. <https://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsl&fileName=008%2Fllsl008.db&recNum=93>.

Author Bio

Jesus Ruvalcaba is a current graduate student at California State University, San Bernardino where he is earning a master of arts in history. He is interested in researching diplomatic history, in particular, the power dynamics that revolve around developing nations in Latin America and their stronger established European counterparts. He also enjoys discussing race relations, specifically those affecting the Chicano community. Upon graduation from California State University, San Bernardino's master's program, Jesus plans to further his education by pursuing a doctoral degree to expand on his master's thesis. He would like to thank those who helped during the creation of this piece. He would especially like to thank Dr. Samuelson for providing research advice and Evy Zermeno for guidance throughout the editing process.

